

Cuckfield Life

Inc. Brook St, Ansty & Staplefield

Local village talk,
by the village

Issue #14 : Dec/Jan '14

Free



Christmas services & events

page 26

A truly indulgent nut roast recipe

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New Year early intentions

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EDITORIAL

By David Tingley, Editor

That's it, Cuckfield. It's serious now; **Christmas** is very nearly upon us all! There should still be time for dashing out to the village for a few last minute purchases if you're cutting it fine.

Inside this magazine you will find plenty for you to catch up with before the Twiglets and Mixed Nuts get opened.

On **page 8** you can see **Holy Trinity School** pupils when they headed down to the **Cuckfield Museum** as part of their WWII topic last month. Thank you to all involved in allowing us to share in their learning experience.

There is the usual range of **news stories** over the page, including one advance notice of a charity race night organised by **Cuckfield Town Football Club**. Sounds like a date for next year's diary!

If you are still wondering what to go along to over **Christmas**, there are the usual **listings** on **page 26** in addition to **Cuckfield Baptist Church** on **page 12**.

Claire Cooper had the privilege of spending time with **Sally Williams** for this magazine. Her book 'Sailing in the Wind' has recently been published and is available from various shops on the High Street. You can read how she came up with her **travel anthology** of short stories in the article on **page 18**.

We welcome our regular contributors: Mayor **Mike Schlup** and **Helly Eaton** on **page 20**, **Neil Fairhall** talks safety on **page 25** and **Fiona Evans** gives some **Christmas tips for decoration** in her column on **page 16**.

Another story I am delighted we could include is the **tribute to Iris Symonds**; a true village hero over the course of her 43 years living here. It's great to hear of people like this but obviously sad when they are no longer part of the community. Thank you to Andrew and the family for putting the article, on **page 24**, together.

I do hope you enjoy your Christmas whether it's here or beyond the village boundaries!

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We'd love to hear from groups, organisations and individuals about what's happening locally. Include a photo if you can. Email your stories to editor@cuckfieldlife.co.uk

Cuckfield Town Charity Race Night planned

Tickets are now on sale for the eagerly awaited Cuckfield Town FC Charity Race Night.

The event, at the Queen's Hall on 1st February, is a popular addition to village calendar, particularly as it is held every two years.

"This allows us to make sure they are brilliant fun, a community draw and not too frequent," said CTFC Chairman Nolan Mortimer. "If you miss this, there's a long wait until the next one!"

In the past the night has raised around £3,000, which has been split between the football club and a chosen charity. This year's charity is Holy Trinity School.

The evening will include 7 exciting races, tote, raffle, music, bar and food. Tickets, costing £3 in advance are available from Rose & Crown Pub or £5 on the door.

Cuckfield Town Football Club has a long and proud history. The club was established in 1872 (which is long before most Premier League teams) and has had a successful existence ever since.

In the early days, home matches were played at Cuckfield Park and the kit was black hooped shirts and cricket trousers. Major changes occurred around 1900 when the team changed to the white kit with blue

trim that they still wear today, and CTFC adopted the recreation ground (behind the Queen's Hall) as their home pitch in 1925 where they have played ever since.

"The club has always been proud of its strong local roots and, through events such as the race night, is hoping to both increase its profile and benefit the community," said Nolan. "It is important to the players and committee that we support local charities."

The club is also very proud to have a strong relationship with Cuckfield Cosmos FC, which offers youth football from ages 6-18. "Our relationship sees their players graduate into men's football with us, as CTFC boasts a well structured youth development programme which focuses on helping the players develop from both a social and footballing perspective, providing fun and development in tandem," he added.

The club has 3 teams in the Mid-Sussex League and, for the more mature player, a strong vets team (over 37 year olds) which also plays in the Mid-Sussex league but less frequently.

Find out more about the club, the social activities and matches by visiting the website www.cuckfieldtownfc.co.uk



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Church creates a stir

For hundreds of years people have heard the prayer on the Sunday before Advent which starts "Stir up O Lord the wills of your faithful people...".

Hearing "Stir up" often reminds people to make their Christmas puddings but this year it is also the inspiration behind Holy Trinity Church's latest fund raising campaign.

On Stir Up Sunday, 24th November, the church launched "Creating a Stir". The church members already give about £90k each year but much more is needed to fund the groups, activities and events offered by Holy Trinity.

They include paid youth workers, running The Old School for community use, youth clubs at The Old School and Warden Park Academy, Sunday School, marriage preparation courses, Solo Lunches, Primary School Assemblies, the Christmas Tree Festival and bereavement support.

Details of all the Christmas services are on line at www.holytrinitycuckfield.org or in the free Christmas parish magazines the church distributes throughout the village.

ABOVE PHOTO: Anne Stevenage, curate Revd Sandra Hall, vicar Revd Canon Nick Wetherall and Kate Berry

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Local light show

You don't have to venture far to be dazzled by a fantastic display of Christmas lights.

A Cuckfield family have been providing the village with a festive treat for the past 10 years, raising hundreds of pounds for good causes.

The display, created by Mike and Wendy Jourdain outside their home in Hatchgate Lane, has become a Christmas tradition for the village and attracts dozens of well-wishers and even the odd coach party!

"In the past we've raised money for the Food Bank, Help for Heroes, Chestnut Tree House and the homeless charity Off the Fence," said Wendy. "This year we've chosen Open Doors who are working in Syria."

"It's nice to do something that gets the family, the street and the community together."

The couple celebrated the annual 'switching on ceremony' on 8th December with friends and neighbours and intend to keep the lights shining until early in the New Year.

Christmas Eve with Ardingly Choral Society

Come and celebrate Christmas Eve with Ardingly Choral Society, singing Christmas Carols and hearing Haydn's exuberant Nelson Mass with soloists and instrumentalists in the wonderful surroundings of Ardingly College Chapel at 8.00 to finish at 9.15pm. Entry is free but we hope for generous donations to St Peter and St James Hospice; annually we raise at least £1,000 for this most worthwhile cause.

This concert has been running for 17 years and has continued to gain in popularity, drawing a wide audience from across the area. Traditional Christmas Carols with full audience participation will be interspersed with movements from Haydn's Nelson Mass. Anyone wishing to join in singing the Haydn is invited to join us at 6.15 for the run-through until 7.45 when the audience is admitted.

If you are able to come, you will be assured of a most warm welcome and a wonderful way both to start your Christmas celebrations and support an extremely worthwhile local cause.



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Penland Farm positive response

By Isobel Holloway, The Penland Farm Action Group
When almost 300 people turn up to a Haywards Heath Town Council meeting, it's time to sit up and listen. Members of the public were invited to the meeting (held at Warden Park School) at which the Penland Farm Action Group (PFAG) was able to speak against the outline planning application to build 235 houses on Penland Farm.

Catesby Estates Ltd, representing Borde Hill, was met with a stony silence from the audience, but there were loud guffaws when it was stated that building on this land would actually increase ecological diversity.

In considering Cuckfield, the PFAG spoke of the total lack of concern for the extra traffic which would be directed through the village, and particularly the capacity of Ardingly Road roundabout. In addition, it was considered that reducing the buffer gap by one third was nothing more than the thin end of the wedge into coalescence.

The proposal was rejected unanimously by the councillors, much to the absolute delight of the audience. The PFAG has submitted a detailed response to the MSDC Planning Officer, and will present its case to Mid Sussex District Council in the new year.

Keep abreast of the news and download our report at: www.penlandfarm.co.uk



Post Office to re-open

In fact the shop, run by Cuckfield local Giles Darling, is already open but the Post Office services should resume from late January. Giles has been busy refitting the small shop completely to cram in a large range of cards, stationery, Christmas stamps and some items on behalf of the Cuckfield Museum. "The old Post Office had two serving counters but, as part of the Post Office's drive to improve efficiency, the new layout has a single counter at the front of the shop," Giles explained.

Early next year he also plans to sell tourism postcards of the village and is appealing for residents to start taking photographs of key Cuckfield buildings, views and icons etc. "I will need to build up a sufficient range of images in due course but this is something I will concentrate on after the Christmas rush!"

Giles Darling is a parish councillor and former civil engineer who is looking forward to serving the community in this new career for him. The shop is open 9am-5.30pm Monday-Friday and 9am-1pm on Saturdays.

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Going back in time

HOLY TRINITY SCHOOL

By Claire Cooper

Children from Holy Trinity School enjoyed finding out what life was like for villagers during World War 2 during a visit to Cuckfield Museum.

The students, from Years 3 and 4 were given an exclusive tour of the Museum's latest Women's Voluntary Service exhibition which includes a fascinating range of exhibits, many donated by people still living in the village.

Museum stewards Evelyn Stenning, Helena Carter, Kate de Saulles, Jean Simmons, Sandra Burns and Rosemary Scott were on hand to answer questions and to tell the stories behind the exhibits, giving the children an insight into wartime life in Cuckfield.

Steward Mike Nicholson guided the 90 children through a quiz, organising them so they could answer questions on different parts of the display at the same time without being in each other's way!

Daphne Stuart was on hand to demonstrate dog hair spinning and chat to the children about life in wartime Cuckfield as a small child. Rosemary and museum curator Phillipa Malins took sessions in the Council Chamber, reading part of Joyce Ruff's account of her time in Cuckfield as an evacuee from 'Safe in Cuckfield' before asking the pupils to illustrate what they found particularly inspiring. "We had some interesting results, including dusty attics in Tower House, Joyce's first billet, many beautiful tortoises (a tortoise was her only companion in her second billet) and an aerial view of Glebe Road (her third billet at no 5)," said Phillipa.

The school plans to send Joyce some of the drawings.

Before the museum trip, the children were visited at school by Cuckfield evacuee Bill Collins, who kept them engrossed with memories of being evacuated to Chichester from his home in Wimbledon when he was just seven years old. He brought with him a DVD made by his grandson of a visit he had made recently to the house in Chichester, still lived in by the daughter of the family

with whom he was billeted. The film also touched on the general subject of evacuation with clips of children doing gas mask drill.

Bill used a replica gas mask to show how this was done and enlisted the help of one of the older boys to don a school cap and carry the gas mask, plus Daphne Stuart's wartime case with Bill's ration card, ID card and luggage label. The children had many questions about rationing, the black out, his feeling on being put on the train (he thought it was an adventure and was fortunate that he was evacuated with his fourteen year old sister who shared the same billet).

Bill recalled how the father of the household was a carpenter working at the different fighter stations around Chichester, repairing the continuous and heavy damage sustained during the Battle of Britain; that his wife would boil up water in a copper on Friday nights and ladle it out into a tin bath adding a good dose of Jeyes' fluid for their weekly wash and that Chichester itself seemed like a village at the time.

Teacher Anne-Marie Nicholson added: "The children have been studying World War II and particularly its effect on Cuckfield village and how the roles of men and women changed.

"It's wonderful to have this exhibition right on our doorstep. It will really help the children visualise how the war changed family life."

Other WW2 activities at Holy Trinity have included an evacuation day, when the children dressed as evacuees, and VE Day celebrations.



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Something different this Christmas

ON YOUR TABLE

Perfect Nut Roast serves 6 (with accompaniments)

Ingredients:

2 large parsnips
Oil, to grease
1 small savoy cabbage, 4–6 outer leaves only
150g hazelnuts
40g butter
1 red onion, finely chopped
150g chestnut mushrooms, finely chopped
100g cooked chestnuts, roughly chopped
100g stilton, crumbled (or other vegetarian-friendly cheese of your choice)
100g brown breadcrumbs
2 tbsp chopped fresh sage
1 free-range egg, beaten

Method:

1. Pre-heat the oven to 180C. Peel and quarter the parsnips, and cook in boiling, salted water until tender, drain well and mash.
2. Grease a loaf tin approximately 20cm x 10cm x 7cm, then line with foil and grease this generously. Blanch 6 savoy cabbage leaves in boiling, salted water for 2 minutes: you'll need enough to line the tin with overlapping leaves but how many depends on the size of your cabbage, so make sure you have enough before you tip away the water. Immediately plunge the leaves into iced water.

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By Caroline Whiteman

As the festive season approaches the cook's thoughts turn to feeding friends and family. Trying to keep everyone happy can be somewhat of a challenge and a great expense on top of all the other costs incurred around Christmas. With quality free-range turkeys and geese clocking in at well over £20, it may be you would like a delicious and cheaper alternative. Perhaps one of your party is vegetarian or not keen on poultry? Below is one of my favourite indulgent recipes (I often tuck in when others are have a Sunday roast). It is particularly suited to a Christmas dinner as it incorporates some of the traditional ingredients we eat at this time, including Stilton and chestnuts. Whatever your festive plans I wish you a scrumptious time with your loved ones.



3. Toast the hazelnuts in a frying pan over a high heat until starting to colour, then set aside. Turn the heat down to medium, add the butter and chopped onion and cook for 5 minutes. Add the mushrooms and cook for another 7 minutes until nicely softened.
4. Roughly chop the hazelnuts and put them in a large bowl along with the chopped chestnuts, crumbled stilton, breadcrumbs and chopped sage. Add the mashed parsnip and softened onions and mushrooms, followed by the beaten egg. Season and stir together well.
5. Line the prepared tin with overlapping cabbage leaves, leaving any excess hanging over the sides, then spoon in the mixture, pressing it down well, and fold any overhanging cabbage leaves back over the top. Cover tightly with foil and bake for 45 minutes. (Alternatively, you can keep it in the fridge for a day or so before baking.)
6. Remove the foil from the top and put the loaf back in the oven for another 15 minutes, then take out of the oven and put a large serving plate over the top of the tin. Holding the tin with oven gloves, turn the plate over so the loaf inverts on to the plate. Carefully peel off the foil and cut into slices to serve.

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Christmas Tree style

DESIGN AT HOME

By Fiona Evans, Limited Editions

When Prince Albert introduced a candlelit tree from Germany into the court of Queen Victoria at Christmas 1846 a new fashion was born in Britain.

Glittery, sparkly and tranquil; loud, glaring and overstated; minimal or rocked up to the max; real or artificial, the choices are endless when it comes to modern day Christmas tree type and style. Depending which camp you fall into, you will choose an artificial tree or a real one. Artificial can take out a lot of the hassle but may have a hefty (one time) price tag. On the plus side, these days the fake variety look like the real thing, come with or without (pretend) snow, can be bought pre-lit and don't have to be watered. There are also alternative choices which are coloured, black or white and may be jazzed up with sparkly bits. A white tree provides a great background for brightly coloured decorations, shimmery silver or colourless glass. A black tree makes a striking background for blue lights, gold trimmings or fluorescent and shocking pinks, yellows, greens. So does the artificial option beat choosing your real tree with your family? Cramming it sleeved in stretchy netting into your car and then spending an anxious 20 minutes or so fitting it into its stand/pot... and then remembering to water it...? In my opinion it doesn't, partly because of the delicious pine aroma and partly because battling with a real tree is a family occasion and part of Christmas.

As far as the decorations go, the chances are you have a lovely hotchpotch of tree decorations collected over the years, some made by the children. But now you want to go minimal? Perhaps a sprayed twig suggestion of a tree with a couple of tasteful glass baubles or just a scattering of white lights? Choosing your style says a lot about you, and whatever you choose will be a real focus. Vintage style is a popular trend and you may have a collection of vintage glass baubles; add handmade paperchains, small toys, crepe paper garlands, honeycomb paper baubles, candy canes and a vintage-style angel.

Adapting bought decorations to make them unique is a quick way to be creative.

There are many alternative trees on the market, wire and paper constructions, some incorporating fibre optics. There are also some ingenious examples of creative alternative Christmas trees on the internet, amazing cardboard constructions, items arranged against a mirror to give the effect of a tree, articles arranged going up a bookcase to resemble a tree, all very clever.

Decorating your tree is a personal thing whether it's stylised or cluttered and the idea has been around for a long time. The first decorated tree was noted in Latvia in 1510, the idea spreading to Germany where one was decorated in barley sugar and paper flowers symbolic of the Paradise Tree in the Garden of Eden.

Whatever your style, have fun putting it together and Happy Christmas!

History bits sourced from www.christmasarchives.com/trees



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HEALTH & LIFESTYLE

At this time of year we are all bombarded with indulgent Christmas recipes, adverts and huge piles of chocolate in the supermarket and then by diet programmes, gym membership and 'low calorie' recipes and food to make up for the excesses of the festive period. We've asked Cuckfield-based health and fitness expert Steve Cork to help with some advice for staying healthy and happy in the face of this rollercoaster of indulgence and denial.

By Steve Cork, Physical Path

In my experience, we need to get past our short-term obsessions and shift our thinking into a lifelong perspective of balance and good health, doing positive things for the rest of our lives. What you can achieve in a month can lose its shine if after six months you are even worse off than when you started.

We have all been conditioned into an almost endless prescription of new and exciting diets, a confusing array of foods to eat or avoid (often the same ones) and exercise 'fads', but I believe it's a change of perspective that most of us need to make a long lasting and meaningful difference to our quality of life.

By stepping back and developing a simple, natural relationship to how we eat and move, we can regain our innate human instinct about what's good for us. This means not limiting exercise happening at certain times and places stuck in a 'box' or being 'on a diet'. Children don't think about moving as a chore, they run, climb, skip and have fun naturally, and there is no reason why that has to stop when we become adults. And we don't have to be slaves to the concept that we can only nurture and reward ourselves by eating 'naughty' snacks or treats.

By building our natural movement skills (like balancing, jumping, climbing, lifting, running) our environment comes to life as we feel more physically capable and confident in it. Lines on the ground can be jumped between, trees climbed or swung from, balance played with any time. This is the key to lifelong, mindful and healthy movement.

The health benefits of being outdoors in green spaces are being recognised, with links to better levels of mental as well as physical health being discovered. Our groups train at Whiteman's Green here in Cuckfield and Beech Hurst Gardens and we are always finding different ways to move through these natural environments, having as much fun as we can in the process!

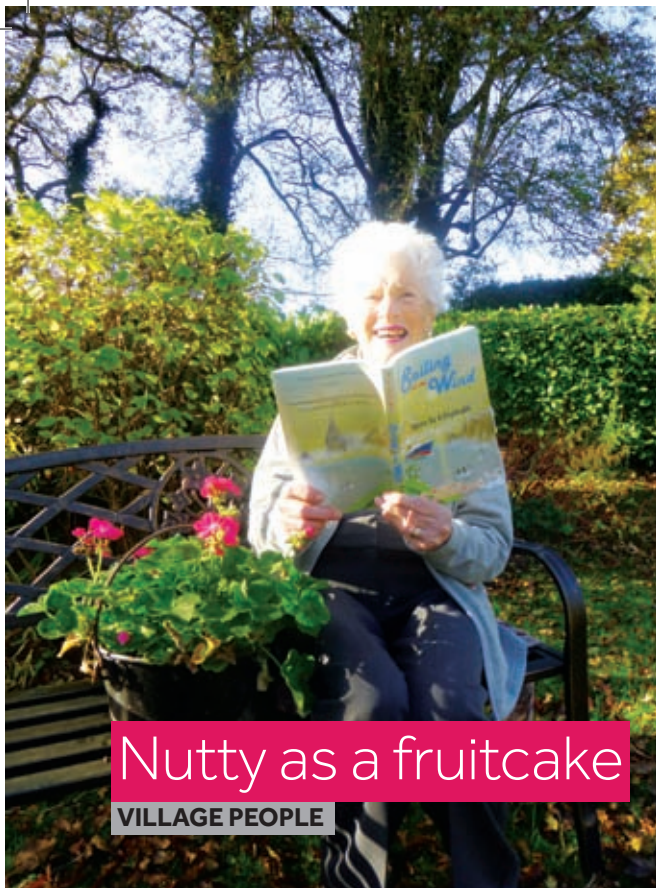
So this Christmas and New Year make it your mission to ignore the marketing messages and buck the trend by shifting your perspective and listening to your body. Remember how much you enjoyed moving when you were a child and how naturally it came to you. Think of food as nourishment to be enjoyed not to be obsessed about and you'll enjoy long term results and be in less need of New Year's Resolutions!

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Nutty as a fruitcake

VILLAGE PEOPLE

By Claire Cooper

'Nutty as a fruitcake' wouldn't be everyone's choice for the front cover of a book about themselves but for Cuckfield author Sally Williams it was perfect in every way.

"My youngest son called me nutty as fruitcake," said Sally. "I replied that I'd rather be fruity than a boring plain cake!" And for someone who has spent a lifetime decorating cakes and passing on her skills to others but has also travelled extensively, often on what some would call a 'whim' the subtitle is not only fitting but gives readers a taste of what to expect.

The book, main title - *Sailing in the Wind*, is a series of short stories covering many of Sally's travels, the adventures she had and the people she encountered along the way (many with uncanny connections to her life and home in Cuckfield). The tales cover most of Sally's life so far, including a trip to Egypt in 2008 - leg in plaster after fracturing her knee cap. "I was determined to go Egypt even with a broken leg," said Sally, who went on to travel to New Zealand later that year with a fractured arm!

Whether travelling by rail, road, air, sea or even bicycle in Jersey, Sally's journeys are as much part of the stories as the destinations themselves. Fellow passengers have become friends and acting on their advice and recommendations has led Sally to new and interesting places.

Sally has been gathering stories from an early age and back in 1987 decided to start recording them. "I bought a portable typewriter in 1956 and whenever I went anywhere or did anything I would come back and write a story about it," she said.

In 1990 she progressed to an electric typewriter and then to a word processor. "But I couldn't have done it

without Matt, one of my grandsons, who came to my rescue and imported everything for me - even the photos," she said.

In her book, Sally tells how she moved to Cuckfield in 1967 and quickly joined a Young Mothers group. "At my very first meeting one of the members said they would like to know how to ice a Christmas cake," said Sally. "Without thinking I immediately said 'I can do that!'" She had learnt how to ice a Christmas cake in Havant three years before.

Sally did the demonstration, which was heralded as a huge success. "I was told I was extremely good at it, so I applied to Further Education and taught not only Royal Icing but Fondant icing which was completely new then. I started running small classes in my kitchen for four people at a time."

This marked the beginning of Sally's cake icing career, during which hundreds of budding cake decorators have benefitted from her expertise, including passengers on one of the world's most famous ships.

Sally explained how she landed the dream ticket. "I was enjoying a trip on the QE2 and got chatting to the couple who ran the bridge classes," said Sally. "I asked how they got the job and they told me they had applied."

Two years later Sally made a phone call asking if she could demonstrate cake decorating. "They said their chefs could do it but I said I didn't think so!" said Sally. They asked if she was professional and Sally said Yes, even though she never really thought she was! "Then they saw examples of my work and changed their minds!"

They were even more delighted when Sally presented them with a scaled iced cake model of the ship. "My son is a naval architect so he drew the ship to scale for me to work from," said Sally.

"I made two and still have the other in a box at home although it is looking a little worse for wear." (Since our interview the ship has met her watery end as all good ships do!)

The story is one of many recalled in the book which, as well as having two titles, also has two author names - Sally Williams and Sally Hubbard Harris

"If you google Sally Williams you'll find over 200 - the most famous being a manufacturer of nougat in South Africa!" said Sally, who regularly receives gifts of Sally Williams nougat from friends who have found it as far afield as Freemantle, Perth, Australia (which got sent to New Zealand before arriving in Cuckfield!) "Hubbard and Harris were my parents' names - so they were the obvious choice."

Sally's work as a healer and a dowser also regularly feature in her stories and have influenced where and when she travels. "The 'why' often comes after I have arrived!" said Sally. "I just get a feeling that I need to go somewhere. I may hear a name or be buying something." Very often the feeling is quickly backed up by further signs and coincidences.

One of Sally's most interesting stories tells of crossing the Antarctic Circle, celebrating with a glass of mulled wine, and marked with the 'Sign of the Penguin' on her forehead wearing a turquoise padded jacket, hat and scarf from Penfolds in the village!



As an active member of the village community (Sally worships at Holy Trinity Church, belongs to the Cuckfield Royal British Legion Women's section, is a member of Tangent and convenor of a U3A walking groups), Sally's book includes tales about her life in the village and her friends, including vicar Nick 'the Vic' Wetherall, won't be surprised to find themselves mentioned.

Her three sons, who all attended Warden Park School, and their families are also central to many of the tales. "My eldest won a National Kit Flying Competition, my middle son was Deputy Head Boy and the youngest was

Head Boy!" said Sally. They are all now family men and she has eight grandchildren.

A keen gardener, Sally opens her garden to the public each summer to raise cash for charity and in 2014 will be opening it for St Catherine's Hospice.

The book is being sold to raise funds for the Holy Trinity Church Repair, Restoration and Re-ordering Fund. The first few copies were sold at a special book signing event recently held in the village and others are on sale at Wealden Stores.

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Geronimo!

FROM THE MAYOR'S TABLE



by Mike Schlup

Well the honeymoon is well and truly over and, unlike my mayoral rival Mark Grant, I've crashed back to earth with a bump. After the euphoria of the election weekend and procession it's been down to business. First of all I was very honoured to have been invited to light the Cuckfield bonfire. I must congratulate all the members and helpers of the Cuckfield Bonfire Society who once again put on a fantastic event with a huge fire and seemingly endless fireworks. I am also delighted to report that I did not recreate Pink Floyd's iconic 'Wish You Were Here' album cover.

The next day I joined the many spectators lining the streets of Cuckfield to welcome the Old Crocks as they hissed, puffed and spluttered their way through the village on the way to Brighton. A reminder of Cuckfield's historic and privileged position on this important route. I was also invited to officially open the new yurt at Holy Trinity Primary School. This will be used to help the children spend more time in the fresh air, come rain or shine.

The ISOC committee is now looking forward to how the funds from this year's election will be distributed. The committee is in touch with many organisations and groups around the parish but if you know of an individual or group that could benefit from some additional funding then please let us know. The fund exists to help any member of the community of any age, whether it be an overseas challenge or simply fixing a broken appliance. Contact the chairman, Jim Ayling, at the White Harte pub on 01444 415434 for more details.

Finally, a huge pat on the back to my arch rival Mark Grant (pictured above) plus Rob, Carly, Alice and Darren from the Wheatshaf, who all completed their sponsored skydive on Sunday 24th November. I can see clearly now that he was the braver candidate.

20

One is better than none

VILLAGE GREEN

by Helly Eaton

Ho ho ho, it's that time of year again – festivities and resolutions. That means fun and frolics followed by lots of good intentions. So here's to festive cheer and a peaceful new year. It's around now I start to wonder how to make all my good intentions last a little longer than just mid January.

So this year, instead of making new year resolutions many of us may never keep, here's a more useful, practical solution.

Think small. Think easy. Think green.

Instead of beating ourselves up for not doing enough, how about patting ourselves on the back for every small good thing we do? If we all try just one of the following suggestions, we'll go a long way to making Cuckfield much greener for the future. And don't worry, if you think you're too small to make a difference, as the Dalai Lama says 'you've never been in bed with a mosquito'.

2014's GOING GREEN: One green resolution is better than none. More, of course, is even better...

- Buy local – our shops are great and there's our ever popular monthly produce market (next is 8th February)
- Say no to plastic bags – always carry your own with you



Naturalist Chris Packham with a Cuckfield reusable bag

- Grow your own food – whether you have a windowsill, pots, a garden or allotment
- Switch to fairtrade coffee
- Support our wildlife – feed the birds and keep your garden pesticide free to help the animals and insects
- Change your lightbulbs to low energy versions – they last a lot longer and, despite the jokes, it takes only one person to change a lightbulb – plus you'll be cutting your energy use by up to 80 per cent
- Turn the tap off when you brush your teeth – a running tap wastes 2.5 litres of water a minute (if everyone in the UK did this we'd save 180 million litres a day, enough water to supply nearly half a million houses)
- Turn your TV off at the mains – sets left on standby are still using 25 per cent of their power
- Unplug chargers and transformers when they're not in use, they still burn energy if they're plugged into the mains – known as 'leaking electricity'
- Turn your computer off overnight – leaving the monitor on at night wastes power and costs you around £30 a year
- Borrow an energy monitor from the library to get you on the energy saving trail – it'll help you see how much energy you really use in your home and how you could cut down

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Paul gets art commission

A former Warden Park pupil has recently been commissioned by his manager at Sainsbury's to produce a piece of art for the staff restaurant.

Paul Milton produced the montage of staff portraits in pen and ink after his boss heard he was an artist and asked to see his sketchbook. The piece was installed at the supermarket last month.

Paul's weekend job allows him to paint during the week and he's looking forward to some more art projects during 2014.



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The Jolly Tanners wishes all the readers a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year

Check out the website for details.... www.jollytanners.com



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Iris Symonds

1941 - 2013

Iris Symonds died on 13th November aged 72. She had lived in Cuckfield for over 43 years and loved the place.

She was born in Pontypridd in South Wales and left as soon as she could after her 21st birthday and came to London where she met Andrew. They hit it off straight away and were engaged within 4 months but due to Andrew's sister's premature death did not get married until a year later. Together they bought a house in Pasture Hill Road in Haywards Heath but soon the family grew and a move to Cuckfield was made in 1970. Iris and Andrew had two boys and a girl, all born in the old Cuckfield Hospital.

Iris loved challenges. She walked in India in two successive years for an Indian charity, 85 kilometres each in aid of rural poor women. When she was made redundant by her husband she retrained as a child care consultant for West Sussex County Council. She started a mother and toddlers group at the Baptist chapel and many youngsters under 18 now in Cuckfield would have been cuddled by her, for she loved babies. She took her turn as President of the local Soroptomist International organisation. She participated in the community of Cuckfield via the Cuckfield European Association and who can forget her winning the player of the match award in the womens' football match between Aumale and Cuckfield. Her other commitment was to the Baptist church. She had put her trust in Jesus Christ as a young teenager in the Baptist chapel in Treforest and this faith sustained her throughout her life and this was celebrated at her funeral when so many people locally and friends from further afield came to support her family. Her biggest challenge was to marry Andrew 48 years ago but that is another story.

She also loved singing and sang in a number of National Eistedfodds and then in the London Welsh choir.



Her last years were clouded with a growing dementia accelerated by her cancer surgery in 2008 and by her eldest son Matt's premature death in 2011. She moved to Birchwood Grove Nursing Home at Easter 2013, where she received excellent care, but finally died in St Peter and St James Hospice.

The recent dementia years tend to make us forget this was a feisty woman who enjoyed her family, friends and life generally. She never forgot her Welsh roots, which made rugby internationals in the Symonds household very raucous occasions; nor her socialist politics, which her husband had to cancel out with his vote on polling days. She leaves a big hole as a wife, mother and grandmother. She was much loved and will be greatly missed but now enjoys the peace and joy that a relationship with Jesus Christ brings to all who trust Him.

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Are your old lights safe?

TO THE RESCUE

By Neil Fairhall, Firefighter

Once a year fairy lights and twinkling Christmas illuminations are retrieved from damp, dusty storage spaces to decorate our homes for the festive season, but poorly stored old electrical decorations and overloaded sockets can create unnecessary hazards at this time of year.

Your existing lights may not be designed to meet new rigorous safety standards. If in doubt about the quality of your lights, the safest and most sensible solution is to replace them with a new set that comply with the new safety standards.

What to consider when buying new Christmas lights...

Christmas lights operate at either mains voltage or extra-low voltage. The safest Christmas lights operate at extra low voltage. They are powered by a safety extra low voltage transformer which will significantly reduce the risk of electric shock and the chances of a fault causing a fire.

The rated voltage should be marked on the product, the product packaging and the instructions, so look out for these. The two most common types of lights used are traditional filament lamps or LED's (light emitting diodes). The electrical safety council recommends the use of "LED" over traditional "filament" Christmas lighting because:

- 1) They operate at extra low voltage which significantly reduces the risk of electric shock.
- 2) They use much less power, generating little heat and so reducing the chances of fire and burns.
- 3) They are estimated to use 80-90% less electricity than filament lamps so are less expensive to run and more environmentally friendly, plus they last a lot longer.

Simple precautions: 1) Read and follow the manufactures instructions and retain them for future reference. 2) Check that your Christmas lights are not damaged or broken before use. 3) Ensure all outdoor lights are connected via a 30mA RCD protected socket. An RCD is a life saving device that protects against electric shock and reduces the risk of electrical fires. 4) Ensure all lights are switched off when you go out and when you go to bed. 5) Keep the packaging for the safe storage of the lights. Avoid storage in damp conditions.

Coupled with electrical safety is another issue that comes to the fore at this time of year.

Drink-driving is a serious problem for all the emergency services throughout the year but particularly over the Christmas and New Year period.

There is a legal limit for driving but we work on the thought 'Drink OR Drive'. It is better to avoid alcohol if you are planning to drive on a night out but also it is important to be aware that if you have been out drinking, you could still be well over the limit the following morning, which is the time the majority of drink drivers get caught.

Don't have nightmares but do have a Happy Christmas from all at Haywards Heath Fire Station.

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What's on this month

AT QUEEN'S HALL

December

19th **Rain or Shine Theatre Company**
perform 'The Snow Queen'
More info: www.rainorshine.co.uk

January

18th **Cuckfield Vintage Emporium**
Our New Year fair will have an exciting 'January Sales' seasonal feel to it: This month look out for an exceptional selection of vintage bargains including, decorative homeware, rustic gardenalia, designer labels and country antiques from Sussex's most original and creative stallholders. Delicious homemade cakes & pies in our Tearoom. Free tea or coffee with every cake/snack. Entrance £1



Trees up for Festival

The annual Christmas Tree Festival at Holy Trinity Church took place earlier in the month. Pictured here is Catherine Snashall Brownie Guider for 2nd & 3rd Cuckfield Brownies. "Over 80 children put a lot of hard work into making 'hama bead' creations for hanging decorations on the tree this year," Catherine said. This will be her tenth year in organising a tree at the festival.

AND ELSEWHERE

December

- 22nd 6pm - **Service of Lessons and Carols**, Holy Trinity Church
- 24th 2.30pm - **Crib Service**, Holy Trinity Church (Admission by free ticket from Parish Office only)
- 4pm - **Carols round the tree**, a short service and seasonal refreshments. Meet at the top of Polestub Lane. Cuckfield Baptist Church
- 4.30pm - **Stable Service** in The Old School (Admission by free ticket from Parish Office only)
- 4.30pm - **Crib Service** Holy Trinity Church (Admission by free ticket from Parish Office only)
- 11.15pm - **Midnight Nativity Eucharist** at Holy Trinity Church
- 25th 9.45am - **Christmas Parish Communion** Holy Trinity Church
- 10.30am - **Christmas Day Service** at Cuckfield Baptist Church

January

- 7th **NHS Retirement Fellowship Mid -Sussex Branch**
10.15am Franklands Village Hall, Haywards Heath
"The Isles of Scilly" Patrick Coulcher
Members come from everywhere but worked at Cuckfield Hospital
- 15th **Mid-Sussex Decorative and Fine Arts Society Lecture** - "Discovering Women Artists 1600-1900" by Bernard Allan
10.15 for 10.45am at Clair Hall, Haywards Heath
- 16th **THE NATIONAL TRUST Mid Sussex Association Lecture** - "Historic Greenwich" by Ian Bevan
Clair Hall 2.30pm
All Meetings are held at Clair Hall, Perrymount Road, Haywards Heath RH16 3DN. Tel: Membership Secretary for more details 01444 457648
- 21st **Cuckfield Evening Women's Institute**
8pm The Old School Cuckfield
"A Policeman's Lot" Neil Sadler
- 22nd **Royal British Legion Women's Section**
2.30pm The Old School Cuckfield
The speaker for the Royal British Legion is "The Highs and Lows of Army Life" by Arianne Murray

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